

MINUTES OF THE  
MAG 9-1-1 OVERSIGHT TEAM MEETING

May 2, 2007  
MAG Office Building, Palo Verde Room  
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Harry Beck, Mesa Fire Department, Chair	Robert Demlong, Phoenix Police Department
* Mark Burdick, Glendale Fire Department	Helen Gandara-Zavala, Scottsdale Police
* Don Schneidmiller, Maricopa County Sheriff's Office	Department
Mike Fusco, Emergency Management, Peoria	* Brenda Buren, Tempe Police Department
Steve Kreis for Cassie Peters, Phoenix Fire Department	Lawrence Rodriguez, Tolleson Police Department

\* Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.

# Attended by telephone conference call.

+ Attended by videoconference call.

OTHERS PRESENT

Valerie Day, MAG	Tom Melton, Scottsdale
Mike Benjamin, MR 9-1-1	Heidi Pahl, MAG
Dave Eaton, MR 9-1-1	Tom Remes, Phoenix
Liz Graeber, MR 9-1-1 Administrator	Brent Stoddard, Glendale
Barbara Jaeger, State 9-1-1 Office	

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Harry Beck, Mesa Fire Department, at 1:32 p.m.

2. Call to the Audience

An opportunity is provided to the public to address the 9-1-1 Oversight Team on items that are not on the agenda that are within the jurisdiction of MAG, or non-action agenda items that are on the agenda for discussion or information only. Citizens will be requested not to exceed a three minute time period for their comments. A total of 15 minutes will be provided for the Call to the Audience agenda item, unless the Oversight Team requests an exception to this limit. Opportunities for comment on items posted for action are provided at the time the item is heard. Chairman Beck noted that no public comment cards had been turned in.

3. Approval of the October 24, 2006 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Fusco moved to approve the minutes of the October 24, 2006 meeting. Mr. Rodriguez seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Update on Project Scheduling Changes

Liz Graeber, Maricopa Region (MR) 9-1-1 Administrator, provided a report on two projects that require changes to fiscal years. The projects include upgrades to the Mesa Police Department and the Tempe Police Department. Ms. Graeber stated that Mesa has requested its upgrade project be moved to Fiscal Year 2008 from Fiscal Year 2007. This was done to ensure that resources necessary to carry out the upgrade. Ms. Graeber stated that Tempe has requested its upgrade be moved to Fiscal Year 2009 from Fiscal Year 2007 to coincide with the opening of its new communications building. She advised that these changes have no impact on the fiscal budget and are being presented to the Oversight Team for information only to ensure they are aware of changes to the approved budget. She noted that no action was required.

5. MAG 9-1-1 Five Year Plan 2007 Update

Ms. Graeber stated that a working group comprising several Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Managers has been working on a draft update to the current approved MAG 9-1-1 Five Year Plan. She said that two main issues were identified in the draft plan: Emerging/changing technology and reduced funding.

Ms. Graeber stated that the draft Five Year Plan was distributed for review to the PSAP Managers and the Oversight Team. On April 19, 2007, the PSAP Managers unanimously recommended approval of the Five Year Plan to the 9-1-1 Oversight Team.

Chair Beck thanked Ms. Graeber and expressed his appreciation for the work on drafting the plan. He stated that any deviations to the plan that might arise should be brought forth for discussion.

Ms. Graeber stated that they tried to hit the historical points such as disaster recovery procedures. She said that the 26 PSAPs, feel they are one community and back up each other.

Chair Beck noted that Mr. Schneidmiller had submitted his comments via email since he was unable to attend the meeting. Copies were handed out. Chair Beck asked members if they had any comments on the draft plan.

Mr. Demlong asked about funding alternatives. Ms. Graeber replied that the best alternative for funding would be to return the monthly excise tax to 37 cents. She added that other sources would be temporary, such as grants, and to try to find any other permanent source would be more difficult than the effort to reinstate the 37 cent rate.

Chair Beck noted that the State 9-1-1 fund pays only for equipment, technology, and maintenance, and the local agencies pay for the staff members. Ms. Graeber noted that seven positions at MR 9-1-1 are paid by the state. She explained that the state receives two percent and local governments one percent for administration from the 9-1-1 fund. Ms. Graeber stated that MR 9-1-1 receives approximately 67 percent of the one percent.

With no further discussion of the draft Plan, Chair Beck asked for a motion to recommend approval of the MAG 9-1-1 Five Year Plan 2007 Update. Mr. Demlong moved, Mr. Fusco seconded, and the

motion carried unanimously. Chair Beck noted that the Five Year Plan would be submitted to the Management Committee for a possible recommendation to the Regional Council.

6. Discussion of Funding Issues

Ms. Graeber provided an update on funding issues to the Oversight Team. She said that different areas of her office are paid by different sources, the majority through the State 9-1-1 fund and some through the MAG 9-1-1 assessment. Ms. Graeber stated that the reduction in funding due to the decrease in the monthly excise tax, which amounts to 20 percent each year for this year and next year will result in the MR 9-1-1 office being unable to fund two GIS positions beginning in FY 2009. She noted that GIS positions are a vital part of the 9-1-1 system because they do the mapping that allows correct plotting.

Ms. Graeber explained Senate Bill 1265 was drafted to allow Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) to be subject to the excise tax for 9-1-1 and for an increase in the administrative fee from three percent to five percent. Ms. Graeber stated that they were requested to delete the percentage language from the bill, which was done, in the hope they would be able to add an amendment later. She said that in the end, the Senate decided that the law already provided the mechanism existed to tax VoIP and there was then a strike everything amendment to the bill. Ms. Graeber stated that a legislative study group is going to be called to study how the 9-1-1 fund is being spent.

Ms. Graeber stated that originally, the Community Emergency Notification System (CENS) was funded through a grant from the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. She said that she was the CENS Manager, and when she became the MR 9-1-1 Administrator, the CENS Manager position as was not filled. As a result, the only cost to the fund is the monthly \$37,000 fee to Qwest. Ms. Graeber commented that because the manager position was not filled, CENS has not been given the promotion and education efforts so that it is used more frequently. She said that funding for CENS is projected to be depleted by March 2008. Barbara Jaeger noted that the State 9-1-1 Office has agreed to pay the Qwest monthly fee for three months to finish out the fiscal year to June 2008.

Ms. Graeber suggested that she is recommending that a working group, perhaps including those who originally established the CENS program, could look at options for funding CENS and then report back to the Oversight Team. Mr. Melton noted that a smaller working group might be more functional than the large CENS working group.

Chair Beck noted that when the CENS program began, it was noted that the funds eventually would be depleted. He said that reducing the service level could reduce costs but would not extend the program that much. Chair Beck stated that attempts to extend the program have been unsuccessful: statewide implementation under the 9-1-1 systems and review/restoration of the excise tax by the Legislature. He advised that it is a very narrow window of time to go to the Legislature. Chair Beck stated that options could include legislation, asking member agencies if they want to fund the program, or discontinuing the program and each agency would revert to using its own notification system. Chair Beck advised that if this happened, there would be no program that could cross geographic boundaries for notifications.

Chair Beck directed that the working group could discuss service levels, costs, schedule, and put together an action plan to bring back to the Oversight Team.

Ms. Gandara-Zavala stated that the cities and towns would need to know the fiscal impact to their budgets.

Chair Beck stated that it is up to the communities to motivate the decision makers. The funding issue is more than CENS because of the reduction in the monthly tax. He suggested raising awareness, doing feature stories and keeping the program in the public eye.

Ms. Gandara-Zavala asked for more detail on the legislative study group. Tom Remes, Intergovernmental Representative for the City of Phoenix, said that all cities and towns have been discussing this issue. He commented that the issue cannot seem to get traction at the Legislature. Mr. Remes stated that they are going to ask legislative leadership to establish a group in the summer months or early fall. At this time, the study group has not been called so their names are unknown. Mr. Remes stated that the Intergovernmental Representatives will work with the public safety personnel and put together some testimony. He added that Tucson is talking to Senator Bee.

Chair Beck stated that the Intergovernmental Representatives and the professional organizations need to bring this issue forward. The good news is the state has a healthy economy.

Mr. Fusco stated that it is easier to enhance service, but once it is cut back, returning to the former level is difficult.

Chair Beck stated that the Intergovernmental Representatives have been active each year on 9-1-1 issues. Even though, the \$15 million taken from the 9-1-1 fund was not returned.

Mr. Melton commented that agencies are not using CENS as much as they could. There is a cost/benefit aspect, and there might be a need to revitalize interest and awareness within our agencies. Mr. Melton commented that the argument could be made with the Legislature that the MAG PSAPs need the program and use it.

Chair Beck asked the cost for a typical activation. Ms. Graeber replied that the average activation costs about \$1,500 to \$2,000.

Ms. Gandara-Zavala suggested showing the success stories created by the CENS program. She encouraged increasing the education piece. Ms. Graeber commented that the program has some good success stories. She said that a suspect was recently captured in Tempe as a result of a CENS notification.

Chair Beck asked staff to check if MAG had any resources available for outreach and video.

Mr. Melton stated that making an educational video for use by member agencies would help bring awareness to staff about using the program.

Names submitted for the working group included Mr. Melton, Mike Dunn from Mesa, Vicki Scott from Peoria, and Tami de Ruiter and Decker Williams from Phoenix, a representative from the Maricopa County disaster or flood control district, an Intergovernmental Representative, and Ms. Graeber and Mary Franklin from the MR 9-1-1 Office.

Mr. Rodriguez said that he would send out an email to the West Valley chiefs to request their assistance for participation in the working group.

Chair Beck stated that the most important aspect is compiling good data. What is done at this level will be a part of a larger effort.

Mr. Fusco stated that perhaps grant money might be available from the LAPC because notifications are a huge part. Other areas to research include public utilities emergency departments and NIMS compliance.

Mr. Remes stated that the legislative study group would be assembling in early fall, and there is time to assemble the facts.

Chair Beck asked members to alert Ms. Graeber of recent case studies for filming success stories. He said that his city's audio-video team could work on success stories; to keep them on file to be looped into public service announcements.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:22 p.m.